

BAKEWELL
RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Annual Report
OF THE
NORTH RURAL SANITARY
DISTRICT,
For the Year 1909,
BY
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Printed by Order of the Council,

ALFRED HAWES,

Clerk.

CATCLIFF, BAKEWELL,

January 10th, 1910.

MY LORD DUKE AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour of presenting to your Council my thirty-seventh annual report on the Health, conditions and Sanitary or other allied requirements of the Bakewell North Rural Sanitary District. In compiling this annual report it will be of advantage to quote the headings under which The Local Government Board and The Derbyshire County Council suggest it shall be written, altho' it may seem superfluous to persons living in the district who are fully aware of the conditions.

(1.) *Physical Features and General Character of the District and General Conditions of the Population.*

This was dealt with in my annual reports for 1903 and 1907. Since the completion of the Dore and Chinley railway the erection of new houses, especially in the Eyam Woodlands, Nether Padley and Hathersage townships, which are becoming residential suburbs of the city of Sheffield has quite transformed the country. This is especially noticeable in the former of the two localities.

(2.) *Chief occupations of the Inhabitants of the District, and the influence of any particular occupation on Public Health.*

This section was fully brought under your notice in the report for 1903, and has not varied.

(3.) *House Accommodation.*

As the house accommodation for the working classes appears from the schedule to be of paramount importance I will deal with it first. Taking this accommodation in the aggregate it is of a satisfactory character. Some of these dwellings are quite satisfactory, but of course some of them especially those erected many years ago, are far from being of an up-to-date character, but there is an air of comfort about them that the occupiers would be loathe to lose: for what

they term the “ new fangled ” ideas. The chief want is the provision in cottage property of an improved type, which would abolish the old fashioned houses so characteristic of the country. The chief requirements which are being gradually enforced are :—

- i.* The want of trapping, as distinct from outside disconnection of the slop water pipes, and the presence of slop stones in the living rooms.
- ii.* The lack of proper and adequate closet accommodation built after an approved plan.
- iii.* Poor and imperfect means of ventilation, this is especially noticeable in bedrooms.
- iv.* The want of pantry accommodation for the keeping of articles of food etc.; and—
- v.* The provision of guttering and downspouting for the collection and removal of rain water. For the want of this provision many houses are damp, and this dampness favours the incidence of Phthisis and Diphtheria. This state of things in the older and in some of the newer houses is aggravated by no provision having been made for a damp course. Since your Council adopted building bye-laws, a damp course is insisted upon. In some portions of the Townships the sufficiency of open space about the houses, leaves nothing to be desired, whilst in others, the houses are huddled together, leaving little room. This condition appears to me to have come about by the configuration of the ground. Owing to the confined situation of some of the houses, and the want of better closet accommodation and a systematic arrangement for scavenging, the cleanliness of the surroundings is not what it should be. Cottagers in many instances have the greatest difficulty in getting the filth removed, and altho' I have interviewed numbers of the occupiers with a view to obtaining their feelings on the question of their being called upon to pay a small sum, which would insure the work being regularly and systematically done, I have never come across any one who objected.

Supervision over Erection of New Houses. Since the adoption by your Council of Building Bye-laws (1905) this matter has become one of regular routine, and a committee of your Council is appointed who regularly and systematically examine all plans, which if found satisfactory are passed, and if not satisfactory are rejected. This mode of procedure has had a salutary and far reaching effect.

Action under Parts i, ii, and iii, respectively of the housing of the Working Classes Act. Inspections of houses referred to under this section are frequently made. The want of a proper system of scavenging is the most apparent factor, especially where houses are huddled together in little groups, any notices required are issued under the Public Health Act 1875.

WATER SUPPLY OF THE DISTRICT.

The townships in my district that year after year have come under the observation of your Council as needing a supply of water, especially in the summer months, are still waiting. I have explained to the sufferers that the cost is more than the townships could maintain. Whilst in this connection I regret to say that cases of plumbism have come under my notice, and been duly reported to your Council, as occurring amongst persons taking their drinking water from The Stoke Flatt Supply during the year 1909. I may briefly summarise the facts thus. In November 1909, I received notice that a case of lead poisoning was affecting a person resident at Hassop. The water from this person's house, and a sample from the tap supplying the Public Elementary School, was sent to the public analyst for the County of Derby, who reported that he found in the former 1/6th grain of lead per gallon and in the latter 1/40th grain per gallon. The amount of lead in the water from the first named source, is a very dangerous amount. In December a second case of lead poisoning occurred in another house at Hassop, quite separate and distinct from the former.

During 1908 lead poisoning occurred among persons taking this water supply from the Stoke Flatt mains and which I reported upon in February of that year. At that time I advised a temporary means of dealing with this risk until such time as a more permanent method had been decided upon and adopted. It will soon be two years since that report, and it is with regret I have to say that this matter has not as yet passed the stage of being "under discussion." The continuance of the use of this water for drinking and ordinary purposes without its plumbosolvent action being counteracted, is a serious menace to the health of all within the area to which it is distributed, and it is more than probable that many cases of lead poisoning have been occasioned, with symptoms too slight it may be to be easily detected, but not the less detrimental to the health of the individual. I was again asked to advise your Council on December 6th, how to deal with this matter permanently, and I proceeded to do so in my report dated December 10th, 1909. This question is perhaps the most serious and most pressing matter in my district.

Milk Supply. The Milk supplied in the district is so far as I am aware good and wholesome. A considerable quantity is sent out of the district to various large centres, and no complaints have been made to me, from any Public Health Department, of any unsound milk being found.

The Cowsheds on the register have been examined, and structural alterations are carried out to meet the present requirements.

Other Foods. During the past year no food of any kind unfit for human consumption was detected. Meat exposed for sale was sound and good, so that no action was taken by your Council under Sale of Food and Drugs Act, or under Sect. 117 of The Public Health Act, 1875. The Slaughter Houses in the District are not improved, their condition has on several occasions been brought before your notice, and a complete report submitted to you.

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.

During the year no system of Sewerage or Drainage has been undertaken. It is my duty to again point out to your Authority the necessity there is for an improved form of Sewerage and Drainage in the townships I have named in several previous reports, and in the order in which they stand, and I hope a means may shortly be found to have the necessary works carried out. This question at Eyam Woodlands is, owing to extensive building operations in that locality, becoming a most pressing one, and is one more township to be added to those previously named. I have in my monthly reports directed your attention to the pressing need for your Council obtaining land whilst the opportunity remains, on which Sewerage treatment may be undertaken. At present the system in vogue is a tank in a field into which sewerage runs, and out of which the overflow has been running for some years untreated into the river Derwent. I believe the owner of the land, where I should suggest the sewerage should be treated, would be willing to dispose of it on fairly advantageous terms.

Pollutions of Rivers and Streams. Nothing has been done during the past year to check the pollution of the rivers and streams in the district. In previous reports the sources and nature of such pollution has been fully gone into.

Excrement Disposal. There are upwards of 2,000 privy middens and pail closets in the district, and the difficulty of disposing of this form of material becomes greater as time goes on. Many farmers refuse to have it on their land for two reasons, (1), because all sorts of things are thrown into these places that ought to go to the refusetip, and (2), because its value as a fertiliser is of small account.

Removal and Disposal of house refuse. This is carried out in two ways, by Public Scavenging, and removal by the occupiers. Unfortunately neither mode is properly executed.

To the very imperfect manner this necessary work is done may be traced all the inconvenience experienced by householders, and the insanitary surroundings we so often have to complain of.

Nuisances : Proceedings for their abatement. Whenever a nuisance, for the removal of which more than a verbal request is called for, a written notice is served by the Sanitary Inspector on the person responsible, this notice gives an account of the nuisance, the work necessary for its abatement, and the time in which the work must be carried out. If this notice is ignored, a final notice would be given. It is, however, very seldom this has to be done, and legal proceedings are not often called for.

BYE-LAWS.

Common Lodging-houses. There are two of these places licensed in my district, both at Stoney Middleton. They have been frequently inspected. They are both of them dilapidated, structurally, one of them particularly so, and they are not adapted for the purpose they serve.

Offensive Trades. There are no offensive trades carried on in the district.

SCHOOLS.

There are twenty-four Public Elementary Schools in the North District. They have been subjected to inspection. The Sanitary condition of some of them is unsatisfactory. They are provided as a rule with a nasty foul privy midden, the worst being that at Stoney Middleton. For this there is no possible excuse, for here there is both a water supply and a sewerage disposal scheme. If infectious illness appears amongst children attending schools, they are excluded from attendance, and occasionally schools are closed and disinfected. The arrangement for the Medical Inspection of school children is administered by the Derbyshire County Council.

Methods of dealing with Infectious Disease. Notification.

When notification of any infectious disease reaches us, visits are paid to the locality, the infection traced whenever possible to its source, disinfectants supplied and advice given to the persons in charge how to best manage the cases so as to prevent spreading of the disease. Printed directions are issued suitable to each form of disease. At the termination of the illness, the rooms occupied by the patients are disinfected by the Sanitary Officer, and afterwards cleaned. The isolation hospital accommodation of the district is quite inadequate, six beds being provided for one form of illness only, namely, scarlet fever. There is a small isolation hospital provided for small pox which is not wholly under the control of your Council.

Methods of control of Tuberculosis. The only system of notification of cases of Tuberculosis within the District is that enjoined by the order of The Local Government Board, bearing date December 18, 1908, which came into force on January 1st, 1909, and which relates to cases of tuberculosis occurring within the practice of District Medical Officers acting as such. I have had notification of one case only under this order during the year. No hospital accommodation is specially provided for cases of this character.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

At the close of the year under review the number of Factories and Workshops in the district were the same as in 1908. The number of workshops on the register being 97. They have been regularly inspected, as a result, 30 written notices have been served, 28 defects have been found and remedied. There are no underground Bakehouses in the district

Incidence of Disease. During the past year six hundred and eight cases of notifiable illness have occurred. These include

eleven cases of Diphtheria, eleven of Scarlet fever, two of Enteric fever, one of Puerperal fever, three of Erysipelas, and five hundred and eighty of Measles.

Of the cases of Diphtheria five occurred at Blackwell in two houses, at one of which serious defects were found. The other cases of the ordinary notifiable diseases call for no special comment here. Measles which became notifiable in July, 1906, ceased to become so in July, 1909. During those three years 817 cases were notified in my District.

Inspection of the District. In addition to the inspections that have been made when a notifiable illness has occurred, by that I mean the ordinary notifiable diseases, when often a house to house visitation over a considerable area has been made, systematic inspections independent of such enquiries have also been made. These enquiries embrace all matters coming under the observation of the Sanitary Inspector or myself, or to which our attention may be called by complaints made directly to one or other of us. By this means of communication we are kept well informed of any sudden, or serious nuisance or condition requiring urgent attention which is enquired into without delay.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION.

Once again I have to report upon the wholly inadequate provision there is for the hospital isolation of infectious disease. Every one must admit that six beds, for the treatment of one infectious disease only, in an area including a large Rural, two moderate sized, and four small Urban Districts, with a combined population of, approximately, 36,000, is little more than nominal isolation Hospital accommodation. The objections to scattered Cottage Hospitals for this purpose are many, and too apparent to call for recapitulation here. I cannot help thinking that the word "Cottage" with its associations of simplicity, has much to do

with this suggestion. "Cottage" in conjunction with "Hospital" has however quite another meaning to the ordinary acceptation of the term, and if this fact was really appreciated, I do not think we should hear much more of the suggestion of providing a series of "Cottage" hospitals in which to isolate infectious disease. I would remind your authority that the proposed Isolation Hospital, is only a Cottage Hospital after all.

VITAL AND OTHER STATISTICAL TABLES.

These Statistics are set out in detail in the tables of the Local Government Board which accompany this report. If they could be printed, the value of the report would be enhanced.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord Duke and Gentlemen,

Your Obedient Servant,

PHILIP S. FENTEM.

